United Nations DP/2008/10

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund

Distr.: General
18 December 2007

Original: English

First regular session 2008
21 to 28 January 2008, New York
Item 5 of the provisional agenda
South-South cooperation

Extension of the third cooperation framework for South-South cooperation, 2005-2007, until 31 December 2008*

Note by the Administrator

I. Background

1. In its decision 2005/7, the Executive Board approved the third cooperation framework for South-South cooperation, 2005-2007. To support the activities outlined in the framework, it approved a budget consisting of $16.5 million in regular ('core') resources and $11 million in other ('non-core') resources, as indicated in document DP/CF/SSC/3/Rev.1.

2. In implementing the programme, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation has focused on three key areas: (a) policy development, research, and dialogue, as well as mainstreaming of South-South approaches to development; (b) creation of an enabling environment and mechanisms for expanded South-South business cooperation and technology exchanges for poverty reduction; and (c) fostering the sharing of Southern development knowledge and solutions.

3. Under the third cooperation framework, the Special Unit has played a significant role in establishing mechanisms to support the sharing of innovative development solutions across the South through efforts to expand a network of focal points at the country and regional levels, supporting private sector development through networking among Southern small and medium-sized enterprises and technology exchanges, and supporting South-South policy development and dialogue. The Special Unit intends to continue its work in these and other areas while developing a programme that responds effectively to new and increasing demands for the effective coordination and management of South-South and triangular cooperation at the country, regional and global levels.

*The compilation of data required to provided the Executive Board with the most current information has delayed submission of the present report.

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II. Justification

4. The evaluation of UNDP support for South-South cooperation, which was concluded in October 2007, emphasized the need for a comprehensive corporate strategy for UNDP to respond better to growing demands for enhanced South-South cooperation. UNDP deemed it necessary to delay preparation of that strategy, and the fourth cooperation framework for South-South cooperation (2008-2011), until it had received guidance from the first regular session 2008 of the Executive Board in the course of deliberations on the evaluation report on South-South cooperation and the related management response.

5. The formulation of the fourth cooperation framework in 2008 rather than 2007 would also enable the Special Unit to obtain guidance from the decisions reached by Member States during deliberations on the subject by the sixty-second session of the General Assembly and the United Nations triennial comprehensive policy review process.

6. At its fifteenth session 2007, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation recognized the need to strengthen South-South cooperation and therefore invited the General Assembly to consider convening a high-level United Nations conference on South-South cooperation on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of action in 2008, or no later than the first semester of 2009. Since the proposed convening of a United Nations conference on South-South cooperation is likely to have considerable impact on the work of UNDP in general and the Special Unit in particular, it is important that the fourth cooperation framework be formulated after the sixty-second session of the General Assembly has taken a decision and provided some guidance on the date, nature and modalities of the proposed conference.

7. The sixty-second session of the General Assembly also has before it the report of the Secretary General on the state of South-South cooperation and a component on South-South cooperation in the report on the triennial comprehensive policy review. Decisions resulting from the deliberations on those reports are also likely to point to the needs UNDP ought to consider acting on in the course of implementing the fourth cooperation framework (2008-2011).

III. Objectives

8. During the proposed one-year extension period, the objectives and activities of the third cooperation framework for South-South cooperation, 2005-2007, would continue, and programme activities supported by the Special Unit would be consistent with the focus areas of the third cooperation framework as elaborated in document DP/CF/SSC/3/Rev.1.

9. Also during the period of the extension, the Special Unit would begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the UNDP evaluation and in the UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011, as well as responding to the decisions of the General Assembly, the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and the Executive Board with respect to South-South cooperation. The Special Unit would also continue to align its work with the mandates contained in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the New Directions Strategy for Technical Cooperation among Developing

Countries, and the Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures Concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries.

10. In addition to preparing a results-oriented fourth cooperation framework, the Special Unit would respond to the recommendations contained in the UNDP evaluation by developing corporate guidance for support to South-South cooperation, leveraging the capacities of UNDP and other United Nations organizations to enhance the contribution of South-South cooperation for development effectiveness.

11. The Special Unit would also strengthen collaboration with United Nations organizations and agencies to improve policy development and advocacy for South-South Cooperation through more effective servicing by the Administrator of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, intergovernmental policy dialogue and advisory services to governments, supporting United Nations-wide efforts to develop strategies for more effective South-South cooperation. Acting on the recommendations of the evaluation of UNDP support to South-South cooperation, the Special Unit would also work to strengthen the Web of Information for Development, creating measurable outcomes and output indicators for South-South knowledge and experience sharing. In addition, the Special Unit would strengthen the piloting of innovative mechanisms and development solutions that are time-bound, results-oriented and have the potential for scaling up.

12. The Special Unit intends to support the work of UNDP in assisting developing countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals while further integrating South-South approaches into UNDP practice areas at the country, regional and inter-regional levels. The Special Unit also plans to continue its support for UNDP organization-wide efforts to systematically mobilize and leverage its institutional, technical and financial resources to help countries develop their South-South policies and programmes, serving as a central catalyst to assist the Administrator in those efforts.

13. The fourth cooperation framework will be submitted to the Executive Board during 2008.

IV. Resources

14. Total regular resources of $14.586 million were available to the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation for 2005-2007, which included a $3.5 million yearly allocation from UNDP and the unused balance from previous years. The entirety of available regular resources was disbursed during the three years of the third cooperation framework. In the light of the recent decision by the Executive Board to increase the yearly allocation of regular resources from UNDP to $4.5 million, the Special Unit expects to programme its activities during the period of extension using those resources.

15. Other resources mobilized for the third cooperation framework totaled $13.289 million, all of which has been programmed. For 2008, the Special Unit expects to mobilize $3 million, including cost-sharing, trust fund contributions and parallel financing.

V. Recommendation

16. The Administrator requests the Executive Board to take note of the extension of the third cooperation framework for South-South cooperation (2005-2007), for a period of one year, from 1 January to 31 December 2008.